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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UNESCO](#) [AR](#) [BL](#) [MX](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER TAIANA ON CHINA,
BOLIVIA, MEXICO, CUBA, AND UNESCO

REF: A. BUENOS AIRES 2749

[1](#)B. BUENOS AIRES 2751

Classified By: Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana December 14 discussed with Ambassador a broad range of topics. Taiana commented on his trip to China and the GoA's interest in developing Chinese markets for Argentine exports. Taiana said the GoA is pleased with the U.S. Congress' recent renewal of GSP privileges for Argentina. Ambassador and Taiana also discussed the need to promote democracy and stability in the region, especially in Bolivia where political and social tensions are rising. Taiana explained the strong trade relations between Mexico and Argentina, and the close relations between the GoA and Mexican President Felipe Calderon. Taiana said he was not aware Mexico had filed a reservation with its ratification of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, but thought the Mexican text might help Argentina reach agreement on ratifying the convention. Taiana also discussed the current situation in Cuba. End Summary.

China

[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador, DCM, Poloff, and visiting WHA/BSC Deputy Director met with Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana December 14 to discuss a broad range of topics, including regional issues, international trade, politics, and other issues (see reftels for other issues). Foreign Minister Taiana was accompanied by Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Luis Cappagli, Ambassador Guillermo Gonzalez, and MFA North Americas Director General Espeche Gil. Taiana commented on his recent trip to China, saying that it was interesting to see the fiscal power of the Chinese economy. Taiana explained that Argentina is trying to develop new markets for its goods in China, saying that "if we do not do something, in two years we will have a deficit, according to the projections." He said Argentina would like to increase exports to China, and that it seems China is interested in buying more from the Southern Cone region.

U.S. Trade Agenda

13. (C) Taiana said the GoA is very pleased with the U.S. Congress' recent renewal of GSP privileges for Argentina. Ambassador said Deputy USTR Veroneau may visit in January. Taiana was open to meetings with the delegation and to developing a solid agenda for such a visit.

Democracy and Bolivia

14. (C) Ambassador and Taiana also discussed the need to promote democracy and stability in the region. Taiana said he thought the U.S.'s willingness to engage with democratically elected governments in Latin America, as was articulated in recent days by WHA A/S Shannon, was "good news." He agreed that democracy is important in the region, and that we must all try to work together without prejudices. Taiana said the GoA is especially concerned about Bolivia, where political and social tensions are rising. He said the GoA tried to stress to the GoB at the recent Summit in Cochabamba the importance of maintaining calm in the country. Taiana said the GoA was trying to discourage the GoB from rash actions that would upset the situation.

Mexico

15. (C) Taiana said the GoA has strong trade relations with Mexico and a close relationship with Mexican President Felipe Calderon. Taiana said that he understood how disappointed Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador must be after such a close

election, but Taiana felt that the time had come to concede for the good of Mexico as a country. Taiana said that Calderon has a more formal and better knowledge of government and running a country than his predecessor Vicente Fox. He said that Mexico is an important investor in Argentina and trade partner. The GoA and Mexico are liberalizing trade ties with Mexico becoming a major consumer of Argentine auto exports.

UNESCO

16. (C) Regarding the ratification of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, Taiana said he was not aware Mexico had filed a reservation with its ratification of the Convention. He was eager to hear of the Mexican ratification and thought the Mexican text might help Argentina reach agreement on ratifying the convention, for which it has been difficult to find consensus in Argentina. Taiana said the convention has raised serious concerns over how it will affect trade. He said the two sides--trade and cultural diversity--are distinct, but both valid at the same time.

Cuba

17. (C) As the final point, Taiana discussed with Ambassador the current situation in Cuba. Taiana said that the power transition has already started with temporary rule being handed to Castro's brother Raul. However, no one will have the power that Castro had, he added. Taiana said that the GoA is pleased that the transition is going smoothly so far, but is also worried that the GoC will use "U.S. meddling" as a propaganda tool to continue to hold the people down. Taiana said that the GoA would like to see cleaner press coverage, but does not think that will happen. The most surprising aspect of the situation in Cuba according to Taiana is the complacency of the people. Ambassador said that Argentina's willingness to continue to raise the human rights case of a Cuban seeking to join her family has been of note and that the need for support of human rights in Cuba

will if anything grow during any transition period.
WAYNE